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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 30 | Min 22 | Humidity 66% Scattered Showers Sensex 76,905 | Nifty 23,350 | Gold 87,850 | Silver 97,860 | Dollar 86.02 | Euro 93.18 | GBP 111.23

SHOWER OF CHAOS

BBMP's lack of preparedness exposed during first rain of season as trees come crashing and roads get waterlogged

PAGE 3

WRONG THE RIGHTS

Bengaluru Urban registered 3,537 cases in 2023 and 2024, which is highest among all districts in state

PAGE 6

Recent fatality shows not all okay with placement of high-power transformers in city — placed too close to homes in some areas, these set-ups are still proving deadly

HANGING ON THE WIRE

BESCOM had identified 16,791 electric shock spots in Bengaluru

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A recent electrocution incident in the city has once again brought into the spotlight the dangers of electrical infrastructure positioned perilously close to residential areas. This time, it was a 20-year-old man, who lost his life on Wednesday while attempting to retrieve a piece of clothing from a transformer. The victim, Kantharaju S, was a resident of Rajappa Reddy Layout, Konappana Agrahara, Electronic City 2nd Stage.

Over the past five years, Bengaluru has recorded 607 fatal electrical accidents, with 572 involving the public and 35 departmental cases.

A Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Ltd (BESCOM) survey identified 16,791 potential electric shock spots within the city, highlighting maintenance issues, especially in residential areas with deteriorating power lines, transformers, and dangling wires.

In response to these hazards,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

> "We are actively working to address these concerns by conducting regular inspections and shifting hazardous poles wherever possible. However, in many cases, relocation becomes challenging due to the lack of suitable space
> — BESCOM official

Let them eat cake

BBMP's Rs 99-lakh tender for supply of snacks and food during its meetings and events comes under fire

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Over the last few years, there have been several instances when we hoped the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) would do a priority check, on priority. In 2018, while its payment of Rs. 49,01,495 to an agency for supply of coffee, tea, snacks and food for those attending Kempegowda celebrations was questioned, in 2023, its was the tender floated also for supply of beverages and food for meetings at an estimated cost of Rs 44.50 lakh.

However, BBMP has gone ahead and once again floated a big, fat tender on March 17 for supply of food and snacks for its functions and meetings. This time the estimated cost is Rs 99 lakh. Well, so far from learning from the past criticism, it seems the BBMP has just doubled the amount as compared to 2023.

The BBMP's decision to allocate Rs 99 lakh for supplying food and snacks for its functions and meetings has invited flak from public and social activists.

"It is nothing but a waste of tax-payers' money. It is not clear how the BBMP is going to pay Rs 99 lakh to the contractor for supplying food and snacks for its

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Craft carnival

The Grand Rajasthani Exhibition organised by Maaruthi Enterprises is holding an exhibition cum sale. Along with a variety of Rajasthani handicraft and handlooms, the exhibition brings together rural artisans from the eastern part of India, featuring vast collections of cotton and silk handlooms and handicrafts. **Where: VV Convention Hall, Horamavu; When: March 14 to March 30, 10 am to 9 pm**

02 Art ahead

The eighth edition of the Whitefield Art Collective (WAC) will be taking place with the theme 'Future is Now'. This year's edition, supported by the Yuj Foundation, promises to be an immersive celebration of art, featuring over 100 installations, exclusive exhibitions, and global collaborations. **Where: VR Bengaluru, Whitefield Main Road; When: March 27 to April 28**

03 Stage spectacle

The Natak Company is presenting a thrilling, star-studded adaptation of Macbeth, directed by actor Rajat Kapoor. With Rajat Kapoor's signature dark humor, this is Macbeth reimagined, with a scary, clownish twist. **Where: Jyoti Nivas College, Koramangala; When: March 30**

04 Medical camp

To mark 20 years of excellence, Samvaad Institute of Speech and Hearing is offering a free assessment camp for vertigo and tinnitus. With cutting-edge technology, audiologists work closely with ENT doctors to determine the cause and plan the best course of treatment, whether medical or non-medical. **Where: Samvaad Institute of Speech and Hearing, Hebbal; When: March 24 to 29**

05 Historical art

Museum of Art and Photography is bringing 'Ticket Tika Chaap: The Art of the Trademark in Indo-British Textile Trade'. The exhibition explores textile labels as the earliest forms of branding. **Where: Museum of Art and Photography, Ashok Nagar; When: Open since March 22**

Child-centric approach adopted for school designs

Changes are expected to enhance perception of government schools, upgrade facilities and infrastructure, and improve learning environment for students

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The initiative aims to transform the areas around schools into safer and more accessible spaces for children

Although the plan to improve school premises will mostly focus on existing schools, both new and existing schools will be considered for necessary upgrades and repairs

Under the Bangalore Climate Action and Resilience Plan (BCAP), the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is planning to improve school premises across the city.

The organisation is considering a child-centric design approach that prioritizes children's needs, focusing on accessibility, aesthetics, and safety.

The initiative aims to transform the areas around schools into safer and more accessible spaces for children. Designs of spatial elements will be developed to enhance learning and play while ensuring children's safety through features such as controlled access and secure play zones. The schools will also get engaging and interactive elements inside the premises to promote creativity. Apart from enhancing learning and creativity, environment-friendly measures on premises are also on the cards.

While greywater management systems may be included in the design for effective water reuse, innovative Rainwater Harvesting (RWH) solutions may become part of the design as well. BBMP is working towards developing a checklist for design components on two shortlisted schools in the city in Sampangi Ramanagara and Rajajinagar.

The measures are expected to enhance the perception of government schools in the community, and improve facilities and infrastructure. They also aim to increase student interest and enrolment due to the improved learning environment.

Although the plan to improve school premises will mostly focus on existing schools, both new and existing schools will be considered for necessary upgrades and repairs.

Committee to assess schools

To help achieve the goal, working committees for parks and schools are expected to be formed, which will include BBMP Executive Engineers (EEs), Assistant Engineers (AEs), experts from the Wildlife Resource Institute (WRI), amongst other senior officials.

"BBMP is working towards the design finalisation and implementation of the shortlisted schools. Once the schools are shortlisted, engineers from the civic agency will visit these schools to carry out detailed site assessments, and develop context-specific designs and cost estimates," said a source.

Under the initiative, BBMP engineers have been tasked to develop and submit school playground designs over the next three weeks.

Sustainability, mindfulness promoted

Volunteers create awareness, encourage eco-friendly practices

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More than 40 ploggers joined hands with Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Marshalls, The Indian Ploggers Army, and Youth for Seva to clear garbage at Chunchaghatta Lake on Sunday. They cleared 15 bags of garbage from the lake vicinity.

Plog Raja, the founder of The Indian Ploggers Army, said that the cleanup primarily uncovered single-use disposables such as paper cups, water bottles, tetra packs, and diyas. He noted that the volunteers spent 90 minutes and cleared more than 15 bags of litter. "While it is absolutely fine to use the lake space for walks, the onus lies on citizens to ensure they don't litter the water bodies. One heavy wind or rain and all the litter will get into the lake and harm the water bodies," he said. He added that the lake authorities must impose strict penalties for those litters or misuse the space.

Bharathy Jayaprakash, one of the volunteers, said that the volunteers also spread awareness about sustainable menstruation. She highlighted that on average, a woman uses over 5,000 pads throughout her menstruating years, contributing to harmful landfill waste. Yet, the environmental impact of this remains largely unspoken. "The solution lies in 'greening the red' which means embracing eco-friendly alternatives like menstrual cups, cloth pads, and period panties. Not only are they better for the planet, but they're also cost-effective, offering a great return on investment. It is time to break the silence, end the stigma, and start the conversation," she said.

The volunteers spent 90 minutes and cleared more than 15 bags of litter

Anjushree, a volunteer, shared that there was also a brief awareness session on individual responsibitlity and small daily steps to manage waste effectively.

Vidhana Soudha to shine brighter

Vidhana Soudha is set to be adorned with a permanent illumination system. As the installation work is nearing completion, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is expected to inaugurate the lighting system in the first week of April, according to Assembly Speaker UT Khader. Costing around ₹5 crore, the project consists of illumination displays that will take place every Saturday and Sunday at 6.30 pm. Additionally, the lighting will be showcased on national occasions such as Independence Day, Republic Day, Gandhi Jayanti, and Kannada Rajyotsava, enhancing the grandeur of the Vidhana Soudha for the public. "We cannot deprive 99% of the people just because of potential threats from a few miscreants. Security is essential, but it should not come at the cost of public access to Vidhana Soudha," Khader emphasised. He noted that the recent book fair organised on the Vidhana Soudha premises received an overwhelming response. Encouraged by this, it was announced that the book fair will be held annually. Many visitors expressed joy at being able to explore the Assembly Hall and its premises during the event. "The government is also considering allowing public visits to Vidhana Soudha every Sunday. Additionally, there is a demand to organise a book fair during the Assembly session in Belagavi, which is under review," the Speaker added.

AI authentication to boost exam integrity

The Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) successfully implemented its AI-driven mobile-based candidate authentication system (Mobile-Based Candidate Authentication) during the recruitment examination held on Saturday. Developed by KEA's engineering team, the technology aims to eliminate impersonation in examinations. KEA Executive Director H Prasanna said that the system was first used during the recruitment exam for vacant positions in the Legislative Council. He explained that as candidates entered the examination hall, their facial images were captured using a mobile application, which instantly connected to the KEA server. The AI system then verified their identity by matching the captured image with the photograph submitted during the application process. "This ensured that only genuine candidates were allowed to take the exam, preventing impersonators from entering the examination hall," he said.

On the first day of implementation, the system was used for 74 candidates in the morning session and 267 candidates in the afternoon session, with the process running smoothly. Building on its success, KEA intends to implement this technology in upcoming examinations. In another first, KEA also uploaded candidates' OMR sheets on its official website immediately after the completion of the exam on Saturday. This move enhances transparency, allowing anyone to view the answer sheets, and eliminating any scope for malpractice or disputes regarding exam results. — BMB

As it rained, BBMP caught napping

First rain of the season turns lethal; tree-falls, a death, and waterlogged roads again

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For weeks, Bengalureans have been pleading with the rain gods for some relief. But when the skies finally opened up, they didn't bring respite—they exposed BBMP's lack of preparedness. Waterlogged streets turned into urban rivers, traffic crawled, and in the most tragic turn of events, a three-year-old child lost her life when a tree collapsed on a two-wheeler carrying her and her father.

This raises the big question: Why does BBMP fail to prepare for the rains every year? Sahiti Kumar, a college student, said, "The primary reason roads flood every year is the unchecked accumulation of silt in stormwater drains. BBMP should have cleared these well before pre-monsoon showers, but in many areas, this crucial work hasn't even started at many places."

Uma Shivakumar, an urban expert said the root cause of urban flooding remains unaddressed. "If encroachments on stormwater drains are not removed, heavy rain will lead to even worse flooding, putting thousands at risk."

During the year, Bengaluru loses hundreds of trees falling mostly during the rainy season. For example, on Saturday alone, a total of 30 trees and 42 tree branches fell across the city due to the heavy rain. "Falling trees and branches during storms have become a life-threatening issue. The tragic death of a three-year-old could have been prevented if BBMP had conducted systematic pruning of weak trees before the rains," said Anil K, a college student.

It is also a common scene in many localities where the rain water floods the neighbourhood. "Every year, we see the same story—roads turn into lakes, vehicles break down, and citizens suffer. The BBMP should have had water pumps on standby to flush out excess water, but where are they?" said Ram Kumar, member of a resident welfare association.

Bengalureans are once again left battling floods, fallen trees, and civic apathy. How many more lives will it take for BBMP to finally act?

Scrambling into action

Meanwhile, following heavy rainfall in the city, BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath has instructed all zonal commissioners to closely monitor the situation and take necessary action. He said that engineers along with the Forest Department staff, have been directed to conduct immediate inspections.

They have been tasked with clearing waterlogged roads and removing fallen trees and branches without delay. Officials have been instructed to ensure ward roads and roadside drains remain clean. They must also visit affected areas to resolve issues caused by the rain.

Control rooms across all eight BBMP zones have been ordered to operate actively. Authorities have been directed to promptly address complaints from citizens and take swift action to resolve them. BBMP officials and staff were deployed on the ground to carry out immediate clearance operations and resolve the issues. Residents facing rain-related issues are urged to immediately call BBMP's helpline number 1533, added the BBMP official.

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MG Road footpath restored through coordinated efforts

As part of BLR Footpath Challenge, footpath has been rid of garbage black spots, broken drain slabs and paver blocks are replaced, and leaky sewage pipes are fixed with BWSSB's help

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Authorities from Rajendra Sinhji Army Officers' Institute (RSAOI), Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), and volunteers from various organisations collaborated to make the footpath along RSAOI on MG Road pedestrian-friendly.

Bangalore Mirror published the story 'Years of promises, but no action on stinky manhole' on March 22, narrating how sewage overflow and stench continued to make MG Road's footpath nightmare for pedestrians just months after basic repairs.

Arun Pai, founder of BangaloreWalks, said that the problem had persisted for many years, and had made a large section of MG Road filthy, smelly, and unwalkable. "The impact of BM's article was such that all the stakeholders came together and the problem has been satisfactorily resolved," he noted.

He said that over the past few months, there have been significant efforts to improve the walkability and cleanliness of the footpath on MG Road, as part of the BLR Footpath Challenge, coordinated by BBMP and The Ugly Indians. He stated that garbage black spots have been eliminated, urination corners near the trees have been blocked, and several broken or missing drain slabs and paver blocks have been replaced. "The RSAOI has supported these activities by installing bright lighting on their walls that illuminates the footpaths at night, and by beautifying the walls with back-lit boards showing high quality photos of disaster relief works carried out by Army personnel," he said.

BM reported about the issue on March 22, narrating how sewage overflow made footpath unusable

He said the final problem that needed a solution was to address the leaking sewage pipes that threatened to negate all the good work done so far. "A meeting was held on site by representatives of RSAOI, BWSSB, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), and volunteers from The Ugly Indian, the root cause of the leakage was identified, and a joint team got down to work, and resolved an issue that had plagued the city's main thoroughfare for very long," he said. A volunteer from The Ugly Indian opined that when all stakeholders get together to solve a common problem with the right intent, tools, and mindset, the job gets done incredibly quickly.

A unique walkathon was organised on Sunday morning where over 110 female employees of CGI, a Canadian technology company with over 18,000 employees in Bengaluru, came out to walk 5 km on the footpaths of MG Road and Old Madras Road, to test it for walkability and cleanliness. Women representatives from BBMP (women engineers and marshals) also joined the inspection walk, making it a true multi-stakeholder event.

Volunteers from CGI had worked with Army volunteers to beautify the walls and restore the footpaths on MG Road as part of their corporate social responsibility activities over the past year, and the Walkathon was organised for them to see the results of the work and rate the footpaths.

Right: Volunteers participating in the Walkathon organised to test the walkability and cleanliness of the footpath

> **"The RSAOI has supported these activities by installing bright lighting on their walls that illuminates the footpaths at night.**
>
> – N Arun Pai, founder of BangaloreWalks

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Hygiene neglected

Cubbon Road

The link road from Cubbon Road to MG Road, near the stadium's back entrance gates (10, 11), is littered with garbage and emits a foul stench. Street hawkers occupy the area daily, and stadium authorities fail to clean up even after cricket matches, making the surroundings highly unhygienic and unsafe.

Daily hazards

Chickpet

The situation at the BVK Iyengar Road and Police Road junction, near City Market, is worsening daily. Loose stones scattered across the junction have caused continuous culvert water overflow, creating hazardous conditions for commuters.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public are hereby informed that my clients are purchasing the immovable property described below from the present owner **Shri. Basappa Narasimha Murthy** S/o. Late Shri. P. Basappa. Any person having any claims or objections for the sale transaction may contact at the below mentioned address / phone number, with concerned documents to substantiate their claim, within 10 days from the date of this Public Notice, failing which, it shall be considered that there are no adverse claims and my client shall be advised to complete the sale transaction with the owners.

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ALL THAT Piece and Parcel of the Western Portion of Residentially converted Vacant Plot bearing Property No.150300200400500330, Village Panchayat Property No.112/95 ad-measuring about 4046 Square Meters out of the total extent of 9307.69 Square Meters /1 Acre out of 2 Acres 12 Guntas (earlier identified as agricultural land bearing Sy.No.35, then Sy.No.35/P7, duly phodi-durasthied and assigned Sy.No.95 of Thimmegowdana Hosahalli village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District) situated on IVC Road, in T. Hosahalli, within the limits of Kannamangala Grama Panchayat, Devanahalli Block, Bengaluru Rural District, duly converted vide Conversion Order bearing No.ALN(D)SR.310/04-05 dated 23/05/2005 & said Plot bounded on the **East by:** Remaining portion of same property & thereafter Kannamangala Palya Road, **West by:** Smt. Dodda Sonnamma's land, **North by:** IVC Road, **South by:** Muslim land.

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Bangalore DATED :24-03-2025

Water shortage leaves residents helpless

As water crisis worsens, borewells run dry, forcing residents to rely on tankers while facing rising costs

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With an increase in buildings and population, Mahadevapura has become heavily reliant on groundwater. However, water supply remains a major concern, as the 110 villages under the constituency are yet to receive piped water, forcing residents to depend on tanker water, prices of which have surged significantly.

As part of the Cauvery fifth stage, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) has planned to supply Cauvery water to 31 villages. While pipeline installation is almost complete, the actual supply of Cauvery water is yet to begin. Some of the newly laid pipelines have developed leaks, and testing is currently underway. Officials estimate that it will take at least another month for water supply to begin in these areas. Currently, BBMP borewell water is the only available source in several parts of the constituency, including Bellandur and Belathur. In most areas, water is supplied only once a week, which is insufficient for household needs. Sudesh Basu, representative of an apartment, said that even borewells are running dry, leaving residents with no option but to rely on tankers. "The high demand for tanker water has led to delays, with residents having to wait for at least a day or two for deliveries. The cost of a 5000-liter tanker has increased from ₹500 to ₹600 to ₹650. Apartment associations in areas such as Whitefield and Bellandur have advised residents to use water judiciously," he said.

Cauvery water supply expected in a month

In most of the BBMP-added villages, the installation of Cauvery water pipelines has been completed. "The supply will commence within a month. In areas where pipeline installation is challenging, temporary tankers will be deployed to supply water. For localities where pipelines are still under construction, including slums, water tanks will be installed to provide water," informed a BWSSB official.

Faulty signboard

Nandini Layout

A major numbering discrepancy exists on 25th Main Road, which is correctly labeled at the north end but inexplicably changes to 23rd Main Road at the center towards the south, despite being the same stretch. Additionally, a perpendicular crossroad is also marked as 23rd Main Road, adding to the confusion.

HC grants custody to parents

The Karnataka High Court has directed that a 16-year-old boy be returned to his parent's custody from his paternal grandmother and paternal aunts. The relatives had sought permanent custody and guardianship, claiming parental neglect, whilst the parents maintained they had left him with them as companionship for the unmarried aunts and grandmother.

Justices KS Mudagal and CM Poonacha delivered this ruling on a petition from the boy's parents, challenging the family court's decision to grant temporary custody to the aunts and grandmother.

Since his birth in 2009, the boy resided with his aunts and grandmother in the same Bengaluru building as his parents. Relations deteriorated in 2015 when the aunts allegedly influenced the boy against his parents following property disputes, leading the parents to relocate with their 14-year-old second son.

Subsequently, the aunts initiated guardianship proceedings, resulting in a settlement requiring the parents to contribute financially. In 2018, the aunts approached the family court seeking monetary support. The parents then pursued custody, but the family court's interim order in April 2023 maintained the boy's temporary custody with the aunts. Considering the "principle of the best interest of the child," the court noted that the family dispute negatively impacted the minor, affecting his custody arrangement with the paternal relatives. Despite the boy expressing comfort with his aunts during judicial interaction, the court determined that this preference, whilst natural due to prolonged cohabitation, should not be the sole factor in determining custody. The court ordered the boy's custody transfer to his parents, whilst granting the aunts visitation rights. **–BMB**

IN HIGH COURT

Manufacturers liable for misbranding, rules court

The High Court has clarified that a manufacturer or packer cannot escape liability for misbranded items solely because the term 'misbranded' falls under seller's liability.

Justice Suraj Govindaraj explained that under section 27 (1) of the Food Safety and Standards Act 2006, manufacturers or packers are accountable if their food articles fail to meet statutory requirements and rules, including misbranding. The case involved Satyaraj M, representing Maharaja Industries, Davangere, which produces 'Shashi Iodine Salt'. On September 7, 2015, Chikkaballapura's Senior Food Safety Officer collected a sample from a Sidlaghatta provision store. Testing at the Public Health Institution, Bengaluru revealed 1.46 per cent water insolubility and zero iodine content.

The petitioner's independent testing at TUV SCD South Asia Private Limited showed 0.29 percent water insolubility and 31.20 percent iodine content.

Subsequently, Referral Food Laboratory, Kolkata's analysis indicated 1.52 percent water insolubility and nil iodine content. The petitioner contested Chikkaballapura Deputy Commissioner's Rs 3 lakh penalty order.

The defence sought benefit of the doubt, claiming manufacturers aren't liable under Section 27.

The court stated, "Section 27 (3) of Act only restricts the liability of the seller to misbranding and certain items ascribed thereunder, that does not mean, that a manufacturer or a packer is not liable for those items which have been ascribed under Section 27 (3) of the Act." **–BMB**

City's advantage of clean air slipping away fast

B'luru's winter air quality is deteriorating rapidly, with PM2.5 levels rising faster than in other megacities, CSE study finds; experts urge stronger pollution control measures

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Bengaluru is witnessing a worsening trend in its winter air quality. A new analysis of real-time PM2.5 data of Bengaluru during winter shows that the city's advantageous climatic conditions and natural ventilation might be losing its grip over clean air.

According to the study by the Center for Science and Environment (CSE), a New Delhi-based NGO, PM2.5 levels in the city between October 2024 and January 2025 underwent the fastest worsening of localised pollution levels when compared with other megacities such as Delhi and Kolkata.

CSE conducted a survey of 14 locations in Bengaluru to highlight the issue.

RVCE on Mysore Road saw the highest rise (45%) in winter PM2.5 levels, followed by Peenya (29%), BTM Layout, and Jigani (14% each). The seasonal average concentration of PM2.5 near RVCE was found to be 56 µg/m³, followed by Jigani (46 µg/m³).

While the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends an annual average PM2.5 concentration of no more than 5 µg/m3 to protect public health, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), under its National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) has specified an annual average limit of 40 µg/m³ for PM2.5.

Hebbal recorded the highest NO concentration (50 µg/m³ in January)—a 1.6-fold increase from November—followed by Kasturi Nagar and RVCE.

CSE analysed pollution trends across six Indian megacities

"Peaking of pollution during winter in any climatic zone is sign of underlying problem of persistent air pollution in these rapidly urbanising cities –Anumita R, CSE

BTM Layout (29 µg/m³) and Shivapura Peenya (32 µg/m³) recorded the lowest winter PM2.5 levels in the city.

The CSE analysis was conducted in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Chennai to evaluate pollution trends in megacities and provide insights into long-term seasonal variations and annual shifts in particulate pollution during winter.

The analysis results underscore that the winter pollution levels upset the annual average PM2.5 levels. PM2.5 levels were 6% to 26% higher than annual averages in the city, highlighting the seasonal impact.

"The peaking of pollution during winter in any climatic zone is a sign of the underlying problem of persistent air pollution in these rapidly urbanising and motorising cities. The growing impact of local sources of pollution shows up in the pollution hotspots across these cities, increasing local exposures and risks," said Anumita Roychowdhury, Executive Director of research and advocacy, at CSE.

Experts express concern over high pollution levels in megacities even after five years of the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP). They say that NCAP needs to be further strengthened to accelerate action to drastically cut emissions from all key sources such as vehicles, industry, power plants, waste streams, construction, use of solid fuels in households, and dust to enable cities to meet the clean air standards and increase the number of good air days.

Man who rammed car into cops held

A man identified as Mahadev Swamy alias Ramachari has been arrested by Magadi Road Police for allegedly ramming his car into police personnel during a night vehicle inspection and fleeing the scene.

The incident occurred on the night of March 3, when Magadi Road Police were conducting vehicle checks on West of Chord Road in Rajajinagar. The accused, who was driving his car, refused to stop when police signalled him for inspection. Instead, he sped past and crashed into the police personnel and their bike before fleeing.

Head Constables Dharanappa and Karthik sustained injuries in the incident. Following a complaint filed by the injured officers, Magadi Road Police registered a case of attempted murder against the accused. **–BMB**

Chariot fall: Toll rises to 2

The death toll in the Bengaluru chariot tragedy has risen to two after 16-year-old Jyothi, who was critically injured in the incident, succumbed to her injuries on Saturday.

Jyothi was seated in an autorickshaw by the roadside, watching the chariot procession, when the towering 100-foot structure lost balance and crashed into the vehicle. While others managed to flee to safety, she was unable to escape in time and was trapped beneath the collapsing chariot. She was rushed to the hospital along with two others but succumbed to her injuries in the early hours.

According to police, heavy rain and gusty winds led to the mishap. The ropes tied to stabilise the chariot became difficult to control, causing the massive structure to wobble. The bullock carts pulling the chariot also went out of control, further adding to the disaster.

Fortunately, the majority of villagers participating in the procession managed to escape in time, preventing a higher casualty count.

Despite pressure from local politicians to continue the tradition, police have restricted the procession, citing safety concerns. Officers highlighted that the 100-foot chariot was structurally unscientific, lacking a proper design to ensure stability.

A case of death due to negligence has been registered against the event organisers, who have been summoned for questioning as part of the ongoing investigation. **–BMB**

Data shows human rights violations rising in B'luru

Human rights complaints surge across Karnataka, with over 9,500 cases in two years; however, only 80 cases received compensation, raising concerns over justice for victims

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Bengaluru has recorded the highest number of human rights violation cases in Karnataka over the past two years, reflecting growing concern over rights violations in urban centres. According to data from the Karnataka State Human Rights Commission, Bengaluru Urban alone registered 3,537 cases in 2023 and 2024, the highest among all districts in the state. The city saw a sharp increase from 1,515 cases in 2023 to 2,022 cases in 2024, indicating a rising trend in reported grievances.

According to the data presented in the Legislative Council recently, Bengaluru Rural reported 115 cases in 2023 and 131 cases in 2024, bringing the total to 246 cases over two years. Neighbouring districts like Tumakuru recorded 528 cases, followed by Ramanagara with 183 cases, highlighting a broader trend of human rights concerns in and around the capital region.

Among other districts, Mysuru registered 516 cases, Tumakuru 528 cases, Belagavi 367 cases, and Kalaburagi 247 cases. In coastal Karnataka, Dakshina Kannada saw 217 cases, while Udupi reported 91 cases. Northern Karnataka districts such as Vijayapura and Kolar reported 212 and 251 cases, respectively. Across Karnataka, a total of 9,509 human rights violation cases were recorded over the two years.

Compensation and resolutions

During a recent reply, Home Minister G Parameshwara said, "Despite the high number of reported cases, the number of resolved cases with compensation recommendations remains significantly lower. The Karnataka State Human Rights Commission recommended compensation in only 80 cases across the state over the past two years. Bengaluru Urban, once again leading in numbers, saw 17 cases resolved with compensation recommendations. Tumakuru followed with 16 cases, while Mysuru had 9 cases resolved. Other districts, including Belagavi, Mandya, and Kolar, had 3 to 5 cases each, while several districts had just one or two cases settled with compensation."

He said that the increasing trend in reported cases underscores the urgent need for stricter enforcement of human rights protections, faster resolutions, and enhanced mechanisms for victims to seek justice. With Bengaluru emerging as the epicentre of human rights concerns in the state, authorities and civil society organisations will need to step up efforts to address grievances effectively.

"The surge in cases is attributed to increased awareness due to KSHRC's public campaigns, media coverage, and district-level sittings by the Chairperson and Members, enabling direct grievance redressal. The Commission also takes suo-motu action on media-reported cases and conducts educational outreach through pamphlets, booklets, and banners to promote human rights awareness. Complaints can be filed in person, by post, online via the official website and HRC Net portal, or through a mobile app. Once registered, cases are reviewed thoroughly, with evidence examined and forensic experts consulted when necessary. KSHRC also makes recommendations for compensation and action against responsible officials, with 80 cases receiving compensation in the past two years. To curb violations, KSHRC conducts awareness meetings with district officials, training programs for police and government personnel, and ensures the annual observance of Human Rights Day across districts to engage authorities, students, and the public," Parameshwara added.

> **"To curb violations, KSHRC conducts awareness meetings with officials, training programs for police and govt personnel**
> – Home Minister G Parameshwara

Anganwadi centres to offer daycare services

Bengaluru's Anganwadi centres will soon introduce 'Anganwadi cum Creche' facilities from April to provide daycare services for infants and toddlers. Many women are forced to quit their jobs after childbirth due to a lack of childcare support. Private daycare centres charge high fees, making them unaffordable for many working women. To address this issue, the Women and Child Development Department is launching Anganwadi cum Creche centres under the child development scheme.

An official said, "Currently, Anganwadi centres cater to children aged 3 to 6 years, providing them with nutritious food and basic education. The new creche facilities will extend these services to children aged 2 to 3 years, ensuring early learning opportunities." The initiative is funded by the central government. A pilot project was successfully implemented in Dakshina Kannada district last year, and now, plans are in place to expand it across Karnataka. The creche centres will be operational from April, and vacant posts for Anganwadi workers and assistants will be filled accordingly. These daycare centres, launched under the central government's leadership, will be accessible not only to underprivileged families but to anyone in need of childcare services. **— BMB**

3rd daily flight between Hubballi & Bengaluru

Responding to increasing passenger demand, IndiGo has announced the launch of a third daily flight between Hubballi and Bengaluru starting March 30. This addition will provide greater flexibility for travellers and address a long-standing request from local businesses and the public. Until now, only two flights—one in the morning and one at night—were operational on this route. The lack of a mid-day flight often left passengers with no choice but to wait until night if they missed the morning departure. To resolve this issue, IndiGo has scheduled a new flight at a convenient mid-day slot. Flight 6E 8905 will depart from Bengaluru at 9:55 am and arrive in Hubballi at 11:20 am, while Flight 6E 7263 will take off from Hubballi at 11:55 am and land in Bengaluru at 1:20 pm. **— BMB**

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Honeytrap scandal

The last week saw huge drama around the alleged honeytrap after Cooperation Minister Rajanna made its mention in Vidhana Soudha. Following this, there have been numerous allegations from all the parties. Recently, PWD Minister Satish Jarkiholi just dropped another bombshell in the ongoing honeytrap controversy! While initial reports suggested that around 40 politicians were targeted, Jarkiholi now claims the number is closer to 400!

And it's not just Karnataka—he alleges that many leaders and officials from Delhi have also fallen into the honeytrap web. "A powerful minister in the Congress government has been trapped not once but twice! This was a deliberate attempt to tarnish their image. Everyone knows who is behind this. There's a whole team working on this, and it's a serious issue that every party should discuss," said Jarkiholi.

'Enrol MLAs' kids in govt'

JDS MLC SL Bhojegowda stirred the Karnataka council with a bold suggestion—if a rule were passed mandating MLAs and MLCs to enrol their children in government schools, the state would finally take their development seriously. Kicking off his budget speech, Bhojegowda, representing the education sector, criticised the government for neglecting education and healthcare, despite their supposed priority status. He pointed out the severe shortage of teachers and argued that compelling legislators to send their kids to government schools would force real improvements. "I'm not saying this because my children have already completed their education," he clarified. At this point, Deputy Chairman MK Pranesh intervened with a real-life example. "In Mudigere, Santosh, the owner of Mudremane Coffee Curing, has not only donated crores for government school development but has also enrolled his child there. Now, that's a model to follow!"

CM Siddaramaiah's 'push' explained

CM Siddaramaiah finally spilled the beans on that old controversy—why he pushed former city police commissioner Shankar Bidari during Yediyurappa's trust vote. During a heated debate in the Assembly recently, BJP MLA Dr CN Ashwath Narayan teased Siddaramaiah, saying, "You used to slap your thighs in confidence!" To which the CM shot back, "No thigh-slapping, just some shoulder-tapping against you guys (BJP) in the Assembly!" BJP's CC Patil then reminded him, "What about pushing Bidari and forcing your way into the House?" Siddaramaiah's cool response? "Cops in uniform aren't allowed inside the Assembly, but Bidari blocked the entrance in full police gear! I just nudged him aside—he wasn't a Marshal, after all!

No water, no wedding

In a bizarre turn of events, a wedding was called off over a fight about drinking water! The dramatic breakup unfolded on Sunday at Hiriyur, Chitradurga district. Both the bride and groom were both engineering graduates working in private firms. Their engagement had gone smoothly. However, trouble started during the wedding when some guests from the groom's side couldn't get drinking water after the engagement dinner. What started as a minor complaint quickly escalated into a heated argument between both families. The "water war" got so intense that there were already signs that the wedding might not happen. Elders and relatives jumped into damage control mode, trying to resolve the issue overnight. Even on the wedding day, last-minute peace talks continued, with both sides persuading the couple to let go of the spat and proceed with the wedding. But the bride remained firm in her decision—no water, no wedding! Despite multiple reconciliation attempts that stretched till noon, she refused to budge, and the wedding was officially called off.

Caught on camera?

During the recent Assembly, a BJP MLA was allegedly filming the drama on their mobile phone. Congress MLA Narendra Swamy demanded that the phone be seized immediately. Vijayanand Kashappanavar backed him, while Minister HK Patil insisted that the name of the MLA behind the camera be revealed and appropriate action is taken. Speaker-in-charge Shivalingegowda was quick to remind everyone that mobile recording inside the Assembly is strictly prohibited—warning that strict action would follow if anyone dared to break the rules.

— Sridhar Vivan

BM SIMPLY PUT

All you need to know about delimitation

Southern worries

Leaders from Southern India met in Chennai on Saturday to demand 'fair delimitation'. In fact, the upcoming delimitation exercise in 2026 has sparked intense debate across India, particularly in South Indian states. Delimitation, the process of redrawing parliamentary constituencies based on population changes, was last conducted in 1976 using the 1971 Census. Since then, southern states have successfully controlled their population growth, while northern states have seen significant increases. As a result, there is growing concern that South India may lose parliamentary representation, shifting political power further towards the North. This has raised questions about fairness, regional balance, and the need for a more equitable approach to constituency reallocation.

Who said it

Union Home Minister Amit Shah had previously stated in 2023 that the country would witness two significant developments after the 2024 Lok Sabha elections—one being the formation of a new government and the other the delimitation of Lok Sabha constituencies. His statement had sparked intense political debate across the country.

What?

Delimitation is the process of redrawing parliamentary constituencies based on population changes. The last such exercise in India was conducted in 1976, based on the 1971 Census. With the population imbalance between northern and southern states, political leaders, especially from South India, fear that the upcoming delimitation in 2026 may reduce their parliamentary representation.

When?

The delimitation process has been postponed twice—first in 1976 for 25 years and again in 2001 for another 25 years. As a result, India has not undergone a constituency reallocation for the past 50 years. However, in 2026, the deferment period will end, making the delimitation process inevitable.

Where?

While the entire country will be affected by delimitation, the biggest impact will be in northern and southern states. States like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan may see a significant increase in Lok Sabha seats, while southern states like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Kerala may experience a reduction in their overall representation.

Why?

The Indian Constitution mandates that parliamentary representation should be based on population. However, since South Indian states have successfully controlled their population growth over the years, their share of seats may decrease compared to states in the North, where population growth has been higher. Leaders from the South argue that using outdated population data from 1971 is unfair, while political experts highlight the challenges of using only population as a criterion for delimitation.

How?

The delimitation process is conducted by a commission appointed under the Delimitation Act. This commission is usually chaired by a retired Supreme Court judge, with the Chief Election Commissioner and respective state election commissioners as its members. The process involves studying population data, redrawing constituency boundaries, and ensuring fair representation while considering geographical and demographic factors.

Concerns

If delimitation is done based on the 2026 Census, the number of Lok Sabha seats may increase from 543 to 753, with each constituency representing approximately 20 lakh people.
South India currently holds 129 seats (24%) in Lok Sabha, but after delimitation, it may drop to 19% of the total. States like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh could gain a significant number of seats.

Voices

Tamil Nadu CM Stalin's opposition:
"Southern states have successfully implemented population control measures. If the new delimitation is based on the 2026 Census, they will be unfairly penalized. We insist that delimitation should continue to be based on the 1971 Census," he stated.

Former Karnataka Minister BL Shankar's demand:
"If the Home Minister says South India will not be affected, he must provide clear explanations. A political leaders' meeting should be convened to discuss and address these concerns."

Dr P Ananthakrishna Bhat, a retired political science professor
"Conducting delimitation purely based on population figures would create a huge imbalance between North and South. Other factors, such as geography and economic contributions, should also be considered. The 33% women's reservation law will also come into play, so delimitation must be planned carefully."

Historical Background

Delimitation has been carried out four times in India's history:
1953 – Based on the 1951 Census (**494 seats, 36.1 crore** population, 7.3 lakh per MP).
1963 – Based on the 1961 Census (**522 seats, 43.9 crore** population, 8.4 lakh per MP).
1976 – Based on the 1971 Census (**543 seats, 54.8 crore** population, 10.1 lakh per MP).
2002 – No change in the number of seats, but boundaries were redrawn.

IN COURT

'Old men's club should make way for women'

Justice M Nagaprasanna made a significant observation regarding women's representation whilst reserving judgement on a petition demanding 33 per cent reservation for women in the forthcoming Tumakuru District Advocates Association elections.

The court highlighted the Supreme Court's recent directive requiring the Treasurer position be reserved for women candidates in the Advocates Association in Bengaluru (AAB). The bench emphasised that other associations ought to welcome advancement instead of opposing it.

"Old men's club should give way to women now. They have been in this throughout.

They are equal; in fact, let them be equal in law. Election was declared in the case of AAB elections but SC stayed and gave direction. Actions should speak louder than words, bring in something like this."

Justice Nagaprasanna further stated, "I, for one, believe yes, there should be representation of women everywhere. Everywhere to the percentage that is necessary. This was fought in the panchayat raj also."

The petitioners stated their appeals to the Election Officer and Tumakuru Bar Association President for 33 per cent reservation of existing posts for women received unfavourable responses. The Tumakuru District Advocates Association declined the request, citing their bylaws that already allocated one executive committee position for women. The association additionally indicated that such decisions required a committee meeting, which the present committee could not organise due to time constraints. **–BMB**

SC to hear PIL seeking women safety norms

The Supreme Court is slated to hear on Monday a public interest litigation (PIL) seeking the issuance of pan-India safety guidelines, reforms, and measures for the protection of women.

As per the causelist published on the website of the apex court, a bench of Justices Surya Kant and N.K. Singh will resume hearing the PIL on March 24.

On December 16, 2024, the Justice Surya Kant-led bench agreed to examine the plea and sought the response of the Union government in the matter.

"We will have to examine where we are lacking to achieve the goal of punitive and penal law. There is not something wrong with the quantity of punishment, but something else," the apex court had remarked.

Senior advocate Mahalakshmi Pavani, appearing for the Supreme Court Women Lawyers Association, said that the Parliament has enacted stringent laws but due to "unwillingness, corruption, and laxity in the police and administrative stakeholders", the timely and effective implementation of these laws doesn't take place and hence, there is no fear among the criminals. **–IANS**

'BBMP should have a good canteen for its officials, citizens'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

functions and meetings. There is no data on the number of people expected to attend these events. There is also no norm on the quantity of snacks or food to be supplied," said HM Venkatesh of Naija Horatagarara Vedike.

Calling the expense 'exorbitant', Vinod Jacob of Namma Bengaluru Foundation said that most of the times the BBMP employees are not available at their chambers. "I am of the opinion that, instead of spending Rs 99 lakh, the BBMP should have a good canteen for all employees and citizens visiting the BBMP Head Office. There is no proper food or beverages available for citizens visiting BBMP's Head Office and most of the time work is delayed and citizens are asked to wait," Vinod said.

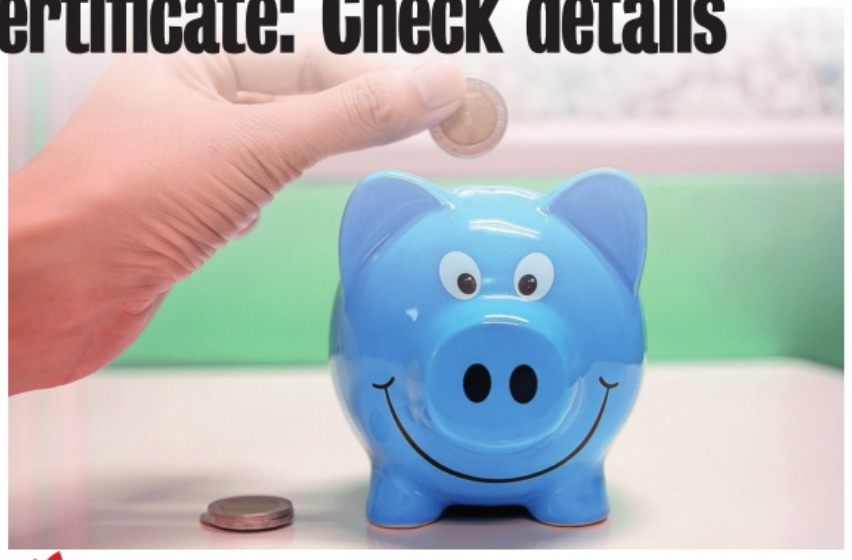
BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of the Deputy Commissioner (Admin),
1st Floor, Annex Building-1, N.R.Square,
BBMP Head Office, Bengaluru - 560002
No. DC/ADMIN/TENDER/122/2024-25 Date: 17-03-2025
SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Two Cover System) (Through GOK KPP Portal Only)
The Deputy Commissioner (Admin), invites tenders on behalf of the Hon'ble Chief Commissioner, BBMP, Bengaluru from eligible tenderers for the service detailed in the table below.
Sl. | Name of the work
1 | Supplying of food and snacks for BBMP functions and Meetings. Estimate Cost : Rs. 99.00 Lakhs. Amount put to Tender Rs. 94,26,750/- EMD Rs.1,89,000/-
(1)Tender documents may be downloaded from the KPP Portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in of the Government of Karnataka. 18-03-2025 (2)Last date for receipt of queries is 20-03-2025 before 17.00 hrs through KPP Portal only. (3)Tenders must be submitted online through KPP Portal on or before 17.30 hours on 25-03-2025 and the opening of tenders will be as per the KPP Portal guidelines. (4) Technical bids will be opened on the website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in in the office of the Deputy Commissioner (Admin) Division on 26-03-2025 at 17.30 hours.
Sd/- Deputy Commissioner - Admin, BBMP

BBMP floated the tender on March 17

However, the BBMP Special Commissioner (Administration) issued a rejoinder on March 18 expressing concern over the 'rumours' on social media about BBMP spending Rs 99 lakh for supplying snacks and food. But, what is particularly concerning is that this rejoinder itself has a typo (instead of March 17, 2025, the rejoinder has mentioned the date of floating the tender as March 17, 2024) in a sentence pertaining to the latest tender. The question is — will there be a rejoinder to the rejoinder? "The tender has been floated to supply snacks and food not for a single function or meeting but for all the functions and meetings to be held this year," the rejoinder reads.

BM Finance Fundas

Partial withdrawal from Mahila Samman Savings Certificate: Check details



The Department of Posts has announced the implementation of 40% withdrawal functionality for the Mahila Samman Savings Scheme. The implementation has been done on the Finacle System used by the India Post employees. The order was issued on March 17, 2025, by the Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts (Financial Services Division). It is important to know that the last date to invest in the Mahila Samman Savings Scheme is March 31, 2025.

According to the order issued, this functionality has been live in Finacle since March 7, 2025, and a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has been attached as an annexure to guide the withdrawal process. The SOP details each step of the withdrawal process within Finacle, ensuring that the system automatically calculates the appropriate interest for the withdrawal based on the balance as of the last quarterly interest due date.

Under the Mahila Samman Savings Scheme rule, an account holder is eligible to withdraw up to 40% of the eligible balance once after completing one year from the account opening date, but before the account reaches maturity.

The scheme has been open for investment since April 1, 2023. Hence, a women investor who invested on, say, April 30, 2023, is eligible for partial withdrawal from May 1, 2024.

"Investors are allowed to make partial withdrawals of up to 40% of the deposit after one year, while the full principal, along with the accrued interest, becomes available upon maturity ...

How 40% partial withdrawal amount is calculated

Consider an MSSC account that was initially opened with a deposit of Rs 2,00,000. After one year, the account balance grows to Rs 2,15,427 due to accrued interest. If the account holder opts for a 40% partial withdrawal, the process begins by determining 40% of the original deposit, which amounts to Rs 80,000.

However, instead of withdrawing just Rs 80,000, the scheme allows the withdrawal to be calculated as 40% of the total current balance. Consequently, 40% of Rs 2,15,427 comes out to be Rs 86,171.

This higher amount reflects the inclusion of interest earned over the one-year period in the total balance, thereby ensuring that the withdrawal is proportionate to the actual funds available in the account.

Features of Mahila Samman Savings Certificate

The Mahila Samman Savings Certificate (MSSC) is designed with a fixed tenure of two years and is available exclusively to women and girls. Minor girls can also make investments in the scheme through their guardians. The scheme has deposit limits that require a minimum investment of Rs 1,000 and allow a maximum of Rs 2 lakh per individual.

Investors are allowed to make partial withdrawals of up to 40% of the deposit after one year, while the full principal, along with the accrued interest, becomes available upon maturity.

Additionally, the interest earned on the certificate is taxable and must be reported under "Income from Other Sources," and it does not qualify for any tax deduction under Section 80C. **ET Online**

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Precariously poised power

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

BESCOM, in collaboration with the city's traffic police, had recently conducted inspections and relocated hazardous electric poles and transformers.

Despite these efforts, numerous complaints from residents indicate that unsafe electrical installations remain a persistent risk.

"We are actively working to address these concerns by conducting regular inspections and shifting hazardous poles wherever possible.

However, in many cases, relocation becomes challenging due to the lack of suitable space. Despite this, we continue to carry out routine inspections to ensure the safety of the electrical infrastructure," a BESCOM official said.

In many cases, BESCOM officials themselves face these challenges, and their safety is also at stake. With the recent showers signalling the approach of monsoon rains, citizens say it is important to address the issue of unsafe electric poles and dangling wires at the earliest.

Too close for comfort

Wednesday's incident showed how just doing an ordinary household chore can make it risky in the presence of high-voltage transformers. Kantharaju, employed as a production helper at a private firm, who lived in the rented house with friends, had washed his clothes before his work shift and was in the terrace to dry them.

During this routine task, one garment fell onto live power lines connected to a transformer alarmingly close to the house. Attempting to retrieve it with a mop stick, Kantharaju made contact with the high-voltage wires and was electrocuted.

Despite immediate assistance from his friends and swift transportation to a nearby hospital, he was declared brought dead.

Following a complaint by Kantharaju's mother, Jyothi, the Parappana Agrahara police registered a case of death due to negligence. The accused include three BESCOM officials, Assistant Executive Engineer, Executive Engineer, and Superintendent Engineer and the house owner, Devraj Reddy. The complaint emphasises that the transformer's proximity and the dangling live wires posed severe threats to residents.

HEALTH TIP: Long exposure to the sun usually causes the skin to become a shade or few darker, this is known as a tan

Sandalwood is pretty much a one-stop solution to all skin woes, including tanning

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What are AI hallucinations?

Why AIs sometimes make things up

When someone sees something that isn't there, people often refer to the experience as a hallucination. Hallucinations occur when your sensory perception does not correspond to external stimuli.

Technologies that rely on artificial intelligence can have hallucinations, too.

When an algorithmic system generates information that seems plausible but is actually inaccurate or misleading, computer scientists call it an AI hallucination.

Researchers have found these behaviours in different types of AI systems, from chatbots such as ChatGPT to image generators such as Dall-E to autonomous vehicles. We are information science researchers who have studied hallucinations in AI speech recognition systems.

Wherever AI systems are used in daily life, their hallucinations can pose risks. Some may be minor – when a chatbot gives the wrong answer to a simple question, the user may end up ill-informed. But in other cases, the stakes are much higher.

From courtrooms where AI software is used to make sentencing decisions to health insurance companies that use algorithms to determine a patient's eligibility for coverage, AI hallucinations can have life-altering consequences. They can even be life-threatening: Autonomous vehicles use AI to detect obstacles, other vehicles and pedestrians.

Making it up

Hallucinations and their effects depend on the type of AI system. With large language models – the underlying technology of AI chatbots – hallucinations are pieces of information that sound convincing but are incorrect, made up or irrelevant.

An AI chatbot might create a reference to a scientific article that doesn't exist or provide a historical fact that is simply wrong, yet make it sound believable.

In a 2023 court case, for example, a New York attorney submitted a legal brief that he had written with the help of ChatGPT. A discerning judge later noticed that the brief cited a case that ChatGPT had made up. This could lead to different outcomes in courtrooms if humans were not able to detect the hallucinated piece of information.

With AI tools that can recognize objects in images, hallucinations occur when the AI generates captions that are not faithful to the provided image. Imagine asking a system to list objects in an image that only includes a woman from the chest up talking on a phone and receiving a response that says a woman talking on a phone while sitting on a bench. This inaccurate information could lead to different consequences in contexts where accuracy is critical.

> From courtrooms to health insurance companies, AI hallucinations can have life-altering consequences and sometimes even be life-threatening

What causes hallucinations

Engineers build AI systems by gathering massive amounts of data and feeding it into a computational system that detects patterns in the data. The system develops methods for responding to questions or performing tasks based on those patterns.

Supply an AI system with 1,000 photos of different breeds of dogs, labelled accordingly, and the system will soon learn to detect the difference between a poodle and a golden retriever. But feed it a photo of a blueberry muffin and, as machine learning researchers have shown, it may tell you that the muffin is a chihuahua.

When a system doesn't understand the question or the information that it is presented with, it may hallucinate. Hallucinations often occur when the model fills in gaps based on similar contexts from its training data, or when it is built using biased or incomplete training data. This leads to incorrect guesses, as in the case of the mislabeled blueberry muffin.

It's important to distinguish between AI hallucinations and intentionally creative AI outputs. When an AI system is asked to be creative – like when writing a story or generating artistic images – its novel outputs are expected and desired.

Hallucinations, on the other hand, occur when an AI system is asked to provide factual information or perform specific tasks but instead generates incorrect or misleading content while presenting it as accurate.

The key difference lies in the context and purpose: Creativity is appropriate for artistic tasks, while hallucinations are problematic when accuracy and reliability are required.

To address these issues, companies have suggested using high-quality training data and limiting AI responses to follow certain guidelines. Nevertheless, these issues may persist in popular AI tools.

What's at risk

The impact of an output such as calling a blueberry muffin a chihuahua may seem trivial, but consider the different kinds of technologies that use image recognition systems: An autonomous vehicle that fails to identify objects could lead to a fatal traffic accident. An autonomous military drone that misidentifies a target could put civilians' lives in danger.

For AI tools that provide automatic speech recognition, hallucinations are AI transcriptions that include words or phrases that were never actually spoken. This is more likely to occur in noisy environments, where an AI system may end up adding new or irrelevant words in an attempt to decipher background noise such as a passing truck or a crying infant. As these systems become more regularly integrated into health care, social service and legal settings, hallucinations in automatic speech recognition could lead to inaccurate clinical or legal outcomes that harm patients, criminal defendants or families in need of social support.

Check AI's work

Regardless of AI companies' efforts to mitigate hallucinations, users should stay vigilant and question AI outputs, especially when they are used in contexts that require precision and accuracy.

Double-checking AI-generated information with trusted sources, consulting experts when necessary, and recognising the limitations of these tools are essential steps for minimising their risks.

(By Anna Choi, Cornell University, Katelyn Mei, University of Washington, The Conversation)

All you need to know about...

Alcohol & cancer

Red wine not healthier
A new meta-analysis published in Nutrients has shattered the popular belief that red wine is a healthier alcoholic option.
After analysing data from 42 studies, researchers found no significant difference in overall cancer risk between red and white wine — and no type of wine was shown to be "safe" when it comes to cancer prevention.

No evidence
"Red wine's reputation for being healthier due to antioxidants like resveratrol doesn't hold up," said lead author Dr. Eunyoung Cho of Brown University. "We found no strong evidence that red wine lowers cancer risk."

White wine risks
Interestingly, white wine was associated with higher cancer risk in women and a 22 per cent increased risk of skin cancer in some studies — though researchers noted that lifestyle factors like sun exposure could play a role. When focusing on more reliable cohort studies, the link between white wine and increased cancer risk was stronger, but no significant risk increase was seen with red wine.

No safe alcohol
Still, each daily glass of red wine was linked to a 5 per cent increase in cancer risk, though this wasn't statistically significant in deeper analyses.
Dr. Brian Black, a family medicine physician not involved in the study, said, "This challenges the idea that red wine is a 'safe' alcohol. The real takeaway is that alcohol in any form carries risk."

A spokesperson for the Cancer Prevention Alliance summed it up: "While these findings debunk some common myths, the message remains clear — limiting alcohol is one of the simplest ways to reduce cancer risk. **-PTI**

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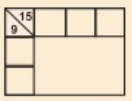
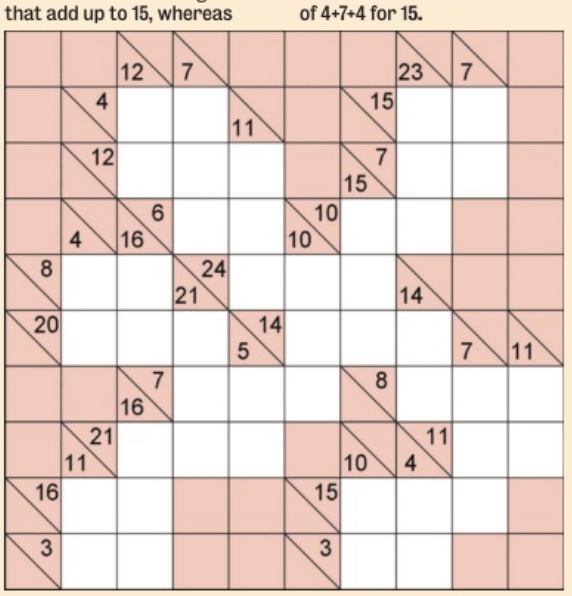
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

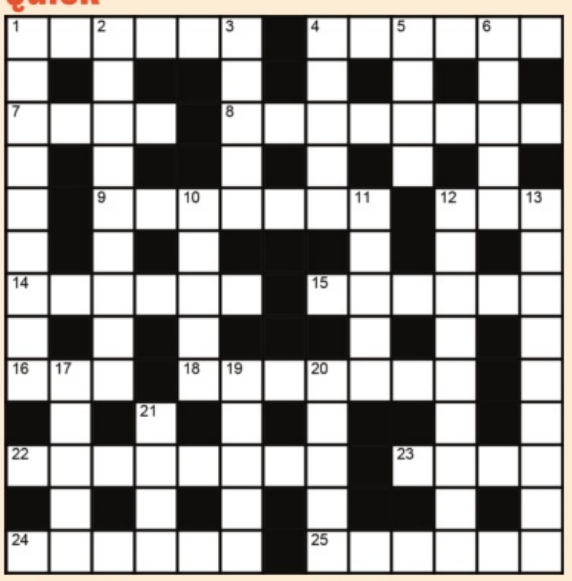


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Method (6)
4 Change the title (6)
7 Spielberg's Saving Private ___ (4)
8 Tobacco alkaloid (8)
9 Sees or looks at (7)
12 'Bravo!' (3)
14 Salivary, endocrine, pituitary, et al.? (6)
15 A section of a poem (6)
16 Food regurgitated by a ruminant (3)
18 High ecclesiastical dignitary (7)
22 Karnataka Rajyotsava is celebrated on the 1st of ____ (8)
23 Understanding term? (1,3)
24 Extreme (6)
25 Production (6)

DOWN

1 Tactical (9)
2 Right nautically (9)
3 Tropical fruit (5)
4 Rushed (5)
5 Post-WWII alliance (4)
6 Craze or madness (5)
10 Required to answer to charges in court (3,2)
11 A discourse of the Buddha (5)
12 Silver medallists (7-2)
13 Truthful, unpretentious or honest (9)
17 WWII German Submarine (1-4)
19 Capital of Morocco (5)
20 Broad and slow, in music (5)
21 Nil (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: B EQUALS G

HKAGCDAC RZVTTVAB
JKQQKUG KNC D GCKAW.

Linemaro

If you were a basketball, I'd never shoot. [Why?] Because I'd always miss you

Mindchow

Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever

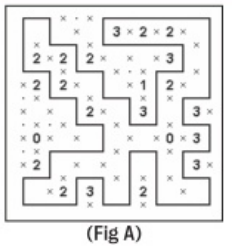
Joke of the day

If you try to fail, and succeed, which have you done?

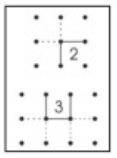
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)



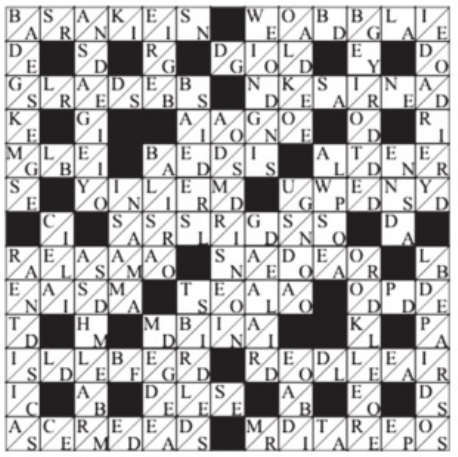
(Fig B) Not Allowed

How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)

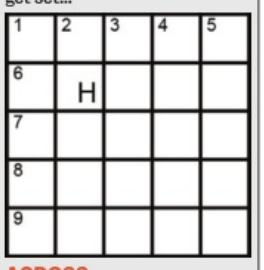
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

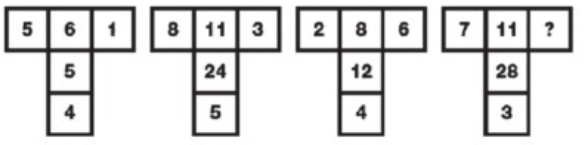
1 Chose; 6 No hep;
7 Tiled; 8 Rille;
9 Scold

DOWN

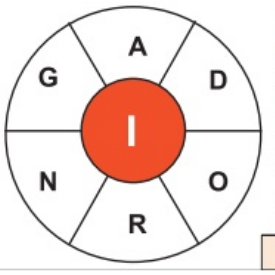
1 Cop it; 2 Hill C;
3 Oh LOL; 4 Den Ed;
5 Erses

Mensapuzzle

Which number replaces the question mark and completes the puzzle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

19 Average; 21 Good; 24 Outstanding

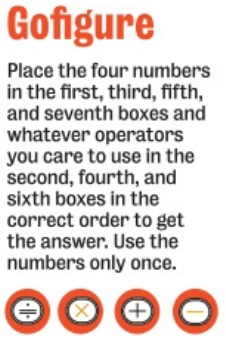
SudokuChallenge

7		6		9		3		5
		2				9		
	8		3		5		6	
	9		4		6		7	
		8				2		
	1		2		8		5	
	3		7		2		9	
		4				5		
1		9		6		4		7

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

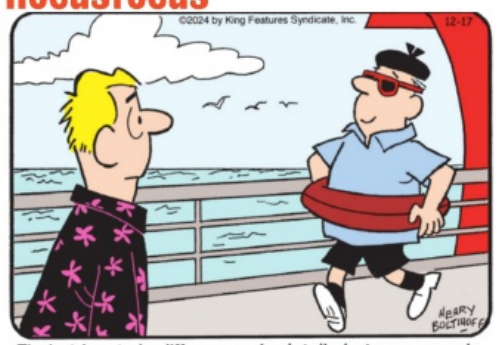


Easy = 8
3 4 7 8

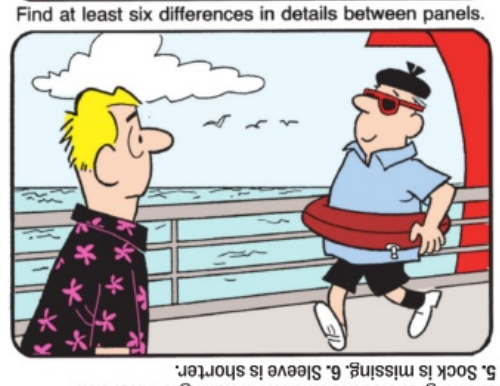
Medium = 36
3 3 6 9

Hard = 3
4 7 8 9

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



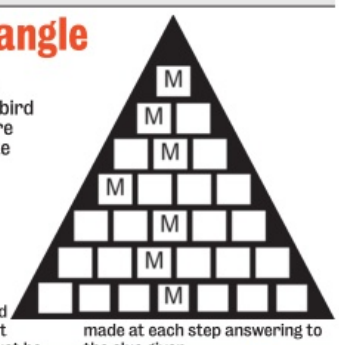
Differences: 1. Air valve is added to tube. 2. Arm is not showing. 3. Cloud is smaller. 4. Railing is different. 5. Sock is missing. 6. Sleeve is shorter.

Riddler

What phrase is represented below? NME NME NME NME I Am NME NME NME NME

Alpha triangle

1 13th letter
2 Lambda follower
3 Large Australian bird
4 Stubborn creature
5 Nocturnal primate
6 Cut timber
7 Complain about



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

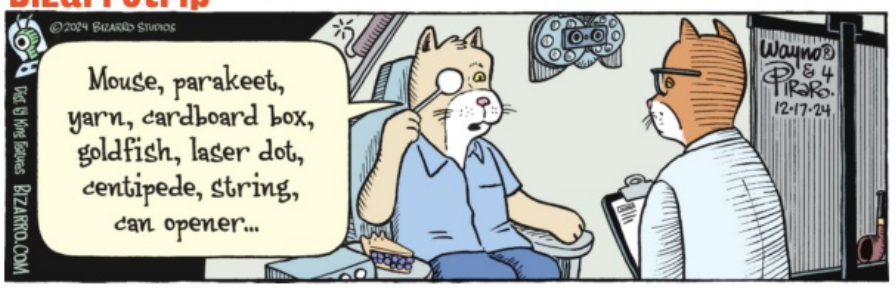
DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye

I WILL TOSS UP THE GOLD NUGGET I FOUND!
ONE NUGGET? CURSES!
THAT'S NOT ENOUGH TO FEED MY POLO PONIES FOR A DAY!
DON'T TRY TO CATCH IT!
PLOP!
PATER!

Bizarrotrip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Dog Is Nine Stones
BIZARRO.COM

Diamond Lil

SO YOU'RE THE ELF ON A BARSTOOL
I'M SURPRISED YOU CAN REACH!
DON'T BE
I'M ALSO THE ELF ON A BOOSTER SEAT
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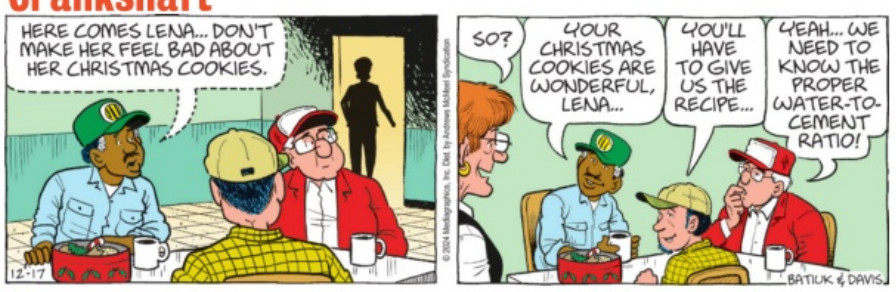
Hart of the city

BEFORE YOU FREAK OUT, HEART IS OKAY.
A MERE FLESH WOUND, MOM!
HEART'S FRACTURED HER FOOT, SO SHE'LL HAVE TO WEAR THE BOOT FOR ABOUT FOUR WEEKS.
A MONTH?! THIS IS A TERRIBLE CHRISTMAS GIFT! SANTA'S GOING ON MY NAUGHTY LIST.
GOCOMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft


HERE COMES LENA... DON'T MAKE HER FEEL BAD ABOUT HER CHRISTMAS COOKIES.
SO?
YOUR CHRISTMAS COOKIES ARE WONDERFUL, LENA...
YOU'LL HAVE TO GIVE US THE RECIPE...
YEAH... WE NEED TO KNOW THE PROPER WATER-TO-CEMENT RATIO!
12-17
BATIUK & DAVIS

Mutts

SHTINKY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE?
THE USUAL. I'M LOST..
YESH. I UNDER-SHTAND. I'M OUT TRYING TO FIND MY "PURR".
... BUT NOT THAT LOST.
12·17
mutts.com
www.kingfeatures.com

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
You are in a strong position today, overcoming opponents and hidden enemies. Stuck money may finally be recovered. Your performance at work will be at its peak. For lovebirds and singles, this is an important day to make significant decisions regarding marriage.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
A positive day awaits you. Last week's challenges are now behind you. You can resume postponed projects and may receive rewards for your hard work, boosting your confidence. Financial gains in business will enhance your stability. Those in the export-import, fashion, and dairy industries are likely to see success.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
You may feel physically and mentally exhausted today, affecting your health and overall mood. Overthinking might lead to fatigue, impacting domestic harmony. Delays in social or family gatherings are possible. Business losses are likely, so avoid new investments. Lovebirds should steer clear of controversies.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Your politeness will help resolve several issues today. Effective communication will work in your favour. You may find a balance between savings and expenses, leading to financial stability. Investing in creative home décor may bring joy and a refreshing change.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Blessed by the Moon, you will develop new business plans and receive strong support from colleagues to implement them. Stuck payments may be recovered, improving business liquidity. However, late in the evening, you might feel slightly low or anxious, which could affect your sleep.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
You will have control over opponents and hidden enemies today. Legal matters may turn in your favour. Your hard work will be recognised by seniors, possibly leading to new responsibilities or a promotion. Singles may find their soulmate.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Happiness fills your day! You may indulge in buying creative items to enhance your lifestyle. Spending quality time with friends and family will bring joy. Investments in assets may be on your mind. Singles could meet a suitable match, and lovebirds will cherish special moments together.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
You may seek inner peace today, but the Moon's blessings will help you stay focused. Avoid investments in property and assets for now. Domestic life will have its happy moments, but it's advised to keep arrogance and ego in check with your spouse. Business disputes are likely to be resolved.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Be mindful of your words today, as careless remarks could disturb family harmony. You may spend money on unnecessary purchases just to maintain social status—avoid reckless spending. Health concerns related to ears, teeth, or throat may arise, so take precautions.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
A great day lies ahead! You will experience good health and vitality. Work will be enjoyable, and domestic life will remain peaceful. Business partnerships will bring positive results. Job seekers may find a suitable opportunity. Lovebirds should avoid sensitive discussions regarding self-respect.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Watch your words carefully today. Be cautious of hidden enemies or workplace politics, as you could be a target of a conspiracy. Avoid risky investments and lending money, as recovery might be difficult. To reduce stress, meditation and yoga are highly recommended.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Negative thoughts may cloud your mind today. Impatience and arrogance could prevent you from making crucial decisions. Seeking blessings from elders may guide you towards professional growth. Avoid investing in non-profitable assets. Lovebirds should refrain from discussing past conflicts.

KIDZONE

Stanmayi, Bengaluru

Ankitha, Bengaluru

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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
(1+2)! = 3!
30 ÷ 2 = 15
15 x 6 = 90

BULL'S EYE
ADORING, arid, darling, ding, dingo, doing, drain, gain, gird, giro, grain, grid, grin, grind, groin, inroad, iron, oaring, ordain, radio, raid, rain, rind, ring

QUOTE UNCODE
Constant dripping hollows out a stone.

RIDDLER
I am surrounded by enemies.

FAST FIVE

O	C	H	E	S
P	H	O	N	E
T	I	L	D	E
I	L	L	E	R
C	L	O	D	S

STRIKE OUT

B	R	A	K	E	S		W	O	B	B	L	E
E	D		R		D	I	L	L		Y		D
G	L	A	D	E	S		N	E	A	R	E	D
M	L	I		A	D	D	S		A	T	E	E
E		G		I	A	G	O		O		I	
S	O	I	L	E	D		U	P	E	N	D
I		A	S	S	I	G	N	S		D	
T	H		M	I	N	I		L		A
N	A	S	A		S	O	L	O		O	P	E
A	L	A	M	O		S	E	D	E	R		B
I		A	S	S	I	G	N	S		D	
S	C	R	E	E	D		M	I	T	R	E	S

QUICK

U	T	M	O	S	T		O	U	T	P	U	T
A				R		A		G		U		L
N	O	V	E	M	B	E	R		I	S	E	E
B		Z		A		A		R		F
C	U	D		P	R	E	L	A	T	E		T
I		R		U		R		N		R
G	L	A	N	D	S		S	T	A	N	Z	A
L		U		E		O		U		E
A		R		A		R		E		A
R	Y	A	N		N	I	C	O	T	I	N	E
A		T		A		A		A		D
S	Y	S	T	E	M		R	E	N	A	M	E

MENSA PUZZLE
4. In each shape, use the left and right hand numbers as a source. The upper central number equals the sum of the left and right hand numbers, the middle central number equals the product of the left and right hand numbers, and the lower central number equals the difference between the left and right hand numbers.

SUDOKU

1	2	9	5	6	3	4	8	7
6	7	4	1	8	9	5	3	2
8	3	5	7	4	2	1	9	6
4	1	7	2	3	8	6	5	9
5	6	8	9	1	7	2	4	3
2	9	3	4	5	6	8	7	1
9	8	1	3	2	5	7	6	4
3	5	2	6	7	4	9	1	8
7	4	6	8	9	1	3	2	5

ALPHA TRIANGLE
M, Mu, Emu, Mule, Lemur, Lumber, Grumble.

GO FIGURE
Easy
7 + 8 - 4 - 3 = 8
Medium
6 - 3 + 9 x 3 = 36
Hard
8 + 9 + 4 / 7 = 3

LOOP

KAKURO

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Heartbreak & moving on

Among all talk of alimony, a look back at Samantha's decision

Samantha Ruth Prabhu and Naga Chaitanya divorced in 2021 after four years of marriage. However, the alimony rejected by Samantha has become the topic of discussion yet again amidst Yuzvendra Chahal and Dhanashree Verma's divorce. It was reported that Verma is set to get an alimony of Rs 4.75 crore after the divorce. Verma was also trolled for it. Meanwhile, amidst that, even the alimony which Sussanne Khan got after divorce with Hrithik Roshan, came under the limelight again. As per reports, Hrithik paid an alimony of Rs 380 crore to her.

It was reported that Samantha was offered an alimony of Rs 200 crore, which she rejected. Some even suggested that she was given Rs 50 crore alimony but she didn't want any of it. It was said that she was too distraught to even think of the money. Reports had quoted a source saying, "Samantha, who is heartbroken and distraught, only needed love and companionship from this marriage and now that it is over, she doesn't need anything else from it."

Chay has recently opened up on his divorce with Samantha on VK podcast. He said, "We wanted to go our own ways. For our own reasons, we have taken this decision, and we respect each other. We are moving on in our lives, in our own way. What more explanation is needed, I don't understand..." **-ETimes**

SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Come to theatre

Action King Dhruva Sarja appealed to audiences to watch Vidyapati at a theatre while unveiling the film's trailer on Wednesday. The movie, the fourth one to be bankrolled by actor-cum-producer Daali Dhananjay under the Daali Pictures banner, is expected to arrive in theatres on April 10.

"I am sure Vidyapati is in safe hands because it is being released by KRG Studios. Nagabhushan plays the lead," said Dhruva Sarja. He said Daali Dhananjay is known for giving back to society whatever he earns from it. Thanking Dhruva for gracing the function, Dhananjay said Vidyapati is a family entertainer. "I thank KRG Studios for supporting Vidyapati and the team for their hard work," he said.

Nagabhushan said he had not expected to become a hero. "I came to Sandalwood to play small character roles. I consider the opportunity to play the lead as a bonus for me," he said.

Congrats for wrapping up

Shooting for the film Congratulations Brother that went on floors three months ago is now wrapped up as per schedule. The team plans to unveil the first song of the movie in Dubai shortly.

While most of the actors are newcomers, veteran actor Shashi Kumar plays the father to the hero in the movie bankrolled by Prashant Kallur under the Pen & Paper Productions banner. Harish Reddy is the co-producer while Srikant Kashya is executive producer. Prathap Gandharva debuts as a director with this movie. Hari Santosh, a well-known director, has written the script and has worked as a creative head for this movie. Rakshith Nag plays the lead while Sanjana Das and Anusha are paired opposite him. "The movie is about how boys in some areas find it tough to find suitable partners for marriage. One person gets a chance to have two girls as life partners," said Hari.

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